

Representing

80,000

Australian

Aborigines

The Australian ABO CALL

THE VOICE OF THE ABORIGINES

EDITED BY J. T. PATTEN

We ask for
Education,
Opportunity,
and
Full Citizen
Rights

No. 6.

MONTHLY, 3d.

SEPTEMBER, 1938.

PARLIAMENT'S DELAY

As this number of "The Abo Call" goes to press, the Aborigines of New South Wales are still anxiously awaiting the New Aborigines Act promised by the Stevens-Bruxner Government.

Mr. Bruxner in his policy speech promised "A NEW DEAL FOR ABORIGINES", but he did not say whether it would be a better deal than the old one. We hope for the best and fear the worst.

The Government seems to be delaying in introducing the new Act and the "cut-and-dried" scheme of anthropologists, missionaries, and other interfering persons for a new Act to put us under the heel of the University and the Churches will now meet with severe opposition.

We have aroused the sympathy of the white community, and many members of Parliament are now awake to the dangers of handing us over to a new Board, which would "protect" us no better than the old one.

What we ask is **ABOLITION OF THE ABORIGINES PROTECTION BOARD**, and we ask for **FULL CITIZEN RIGHTS FOR ALL ABORIGINES IN NEW SOUTH WALES**.

GIVE US EQUAL OPPORTUNITY AND EDUCATION!

We do not want a Dog and Goat Act for Aborigines!

All we ask is to be treated as human beings and as decent Australians.

REPEAL THE ABORIGINES ACT!

CONDITIONS AT COLLARENEBRI

In the previous number of "The Abo Call" an exposure was made of the colour-bar at Collarenebri, whereby twenty-four Aboriginal children, living only a mile from the town, are debarred from the Public School.

A question was asked in the House on this matter by Hon. J. T. Lang, on August 5th., and the question was answered by Mr. Gollan, Chief Secretary, on 25th August.

Mr. Gollan, in his reply, stated that no instructions have been issued for Aboriginal children to be removed from Collarenebri to Brewarrina. The Minister admitted that "there are six Aboriginal families with children of school age residing at Collarenebri, the children numbering about thirteen."

We can inform the Minister that there are twenty-four such children at Collarenebri, the names of whom were printed in the August issue of "The Abo Call", and that there is another family with seven children of which the parents are anxious to return to Collarenebri (their home-town) as soon as a school is provided.

The Minister further declared "The Aboriginal children have been excluded from the Collarenebri Public School, but they have, in the past, been given some education by the wife of a local minister of religion."

Our information is that the "education" so given was of a casual nature, and was more concerned with Heaven than with earth (preparing the children for extermination?). In any case, such education is not a responsibility of any "local minister of religion", but is the responsibility of the Minister for Education.

Mr. Gollan's answer to Mr. Lang continued as follows: "The Department of Education is of opinion, however, that separate proper facilities should be made available."

Why "separate"? The children live less than a mile from the Public School at Collarenebri, which is a fine building with capable teachers. Why cannot our Aboriginal children go to this school, instead of being, as the Minister admits, "debarred" from it?

It must be well-known to Mr. Gollan and to the Minister for Education that, at the nearby towns of Walgett and Mungindi, the Aboriginal children attend the public schools, and are very satisfactory pupils.

In almost every other town in the West, the children of Aborigines are allowed to mix with the white children, at school-desk and on the play-grounds (except where special "Missions" such as Brewarrina and Pilliga have our people yarded up in their own pens).

By what right are the Aboriginal children of Collarenebri "debarred" from attending the school? Has the school-master the legal right to refuse to enrol these children? We think not.

Last month we published a photograph of sixteen of these children, showing that their parents keep them as neat and clean and healthy as any white children.

In fact a number of the children are very "fair" in colour. There are very few full-bloods, and almost every child is the descendant of white pioneers of the west.

Many respected citizens of Collarenebri also have Aboriginal blood in their veins, and ought to be proud of it.

Continuing, the Minister declared that some of the families at Collarenebri have "expressed a desire" to go to Pilliga or Moree.

Terror Tactics

We believe the Minister has been misinformed by his officers in this matter, as our representative who visited Collarenebri in July found the people in a state of terror through threats that had been made to remove them forcibly to a Government Reserve.

They were afraid because they had heard of the terrible sufferings of the Aborigines removed from Angledool to Brewarrina, (evidence of which was given before the Parliamentary Select Committee). Why should the Minister assume that our people "desire" to be removed from their birth-place at "Colly", where they are well and favourably known to the white citizens, and can obtain work?

Why should they exchange their home-town, where their ancestors lie buried in the famous "glass-bottle" cemetery, to go to a Government Station



TWO AUSTRALIANS IN THE MODERN AGE

to be bullied and half-starved? Why should they give up their present comparative liberty to submit themselves voluntarily to the extermination tactics of the A.P. Board?

Mr. Gollan further declared, "The police have expressed the opinion that there is no reason why all these people could not be transferred to one of the places mentioned above" (Pilliga or Moree).

We say there is no reason why the police should not be transferred from Collarenebri, as they are only public servants, and can be moved about, whether they like it or not.

But Aborigines are not beasts of the field, to be driven like mobs from one place to another. That is the answer to Mr. Gollan, and to his officer at Collarenebri.

If Mr. Gollan wants the truth, let him move for the appointment of a ROYAL COMMISSION. We have evidence that will make his hair stand on end, as to conditions actually obtaining, in New South Wales, TODAY!

Creating Prejudice

The Minister, in his reply to Mr. Lang, created prejudice by alleging that our people, at Collarenebri, may be "polluting the town water supply."

This is one of the most ridiculous statements ever made in Parliament by a responsible Minister of the Crown. Our people have lived on the banks of the Barwon for thousands of years without polluting the water supply. It is the white man who has placed big towns, such as Mungindi, Collarenebri, and Walgett, right on the river-bank, to pollute the water.

Further downstream, the Darling runs right through Brewarrina, Bourke, Wilcannia and Menindie, and receives all the white man's drainage, which is enough to poison every cod in the stream.

Yet because six Aboriginal families are camped on the river-flats at Collarenebri, half a mile from the banks of the Barwon, a Minister of the Crown assumes that our people are "polluting" the water. (What about the millions of sheep which pollute the waters?)

The cream of the joke is that our people at Collarenebri are camped DOWNSTREAM from the town. It is the white people who have polluted the Barwon for our people, only a handful of them left.

Still further creating prejudice, Mr. Gollan declared "I understand there has been some talk locally of having the Aborigines removed from the stock-route, as their presence there and the fact that they keep dogs, interferes with the passage of stock."

Another ridiculous statement! Our people are camped on a big reserve, or common, one mile from the town, and the nearest house is half-a-mile from the road! It is all part of the cowardly method by which white Authorities hit at the defenceless blackfellow without giving him a chance to say a word in reply.

Cowardly Accusations

In all the millions of acres in the Vast Open Spaces of the West, surely our people are entitled to pitch their camp in some little corner without being accused of stealing land from sheep!

Mr. Gollan himself admitted that the Aborigines of Collarenebri are drovers and bush-workers. Does he think they would allow their dogs to go out when a mob of sheep was approaching? And does he think a blackfellow's dog has no more sense than a Minister of the Crown?

The whole drift of Mr. Gollan's answer shows the irrational prejudice against which our unfortunate people have to contend, in their last struggle to preserve themselves from extinction.

Deprived of education, accused of polluting water and interfering with the passage of stock, how can we answer such accusations made by a Minister of the Crown on the floor of Parliament House? We can only hope that there are some Members of Parliament who will take up the cudgels on behalf of our despised and persecuted race, and that we will get some measure of justice BEFORE IT IS TOO LATE.

White Australians, we appeal to you to give us a chance to improve ourselves!

The treatment of Aborigines in Australia, for 150 years, and continued today, has been a worse example of racial persecution and race prejudice than the Jews in Germany have suffered.

You are admitting Jewish aliens to Australia, while exterminating the Old Aborigines whose ancestors have roamed this country from time immemorial.

A curse is on the white men of Australia who stand by callously and see our people die.

THIS MEANS YOU!

LAND LEASE SCANDAL

IS A.P. BOARD ENTITLED TO LEASE ABO. RESERVES?

The Aborigines Progressive Association is investigating the legal position regarding the leasing of Aboriginal Reserves in New South Wales to white men for grazing purposes.

As far as we can discover, the Aborigines Protection Board is trustee for approximately 14,000 acres of land, reserved for the use of Aborigines in New South Wales.

These Reserves are scattered throughout the State, some being only a few acres in extent, and the biggest being Cummeragunja, a Reserve of 5,000 acres in the county of Bama, on the banks of the Murray River.

With only a few exceptions, the Aboriginal Reserves are poor land, of not much value to white men. Nevertheless, these Reserves were granted by Parliament for the use of our people exclusively, and it was never intended that white men should have access to these Reserves for commercial money-making purposes.

There are approximately 10,000 Aborigines in New South Wales, which means that an average of less than an acre-and-a-half of land is Reserved for each Aboriginal in the land of his ancestors, which, considering the poor quality of the land reserved, is a small enough inheritance for the A.P. Board to keep as an inviolable trust for our people.

In the United States of America, as is well known, oil was struck on Indian Reservations, and, despite attempts by private speculators, the Government stood to its word and insisted that the

Indians should get the financial benefit of the oil yield.

In Australia, however, there has been no oil struck. The only commercial value of the Reservations is for grass to be used for pastoral purposes.

The position here is that the A.P. Board, as trustees for 14,000 acres of land reserved for Aborigines, has in its wisdom seen fit to lease many of these reservations, wholly or in part, to white men for grazing purposes.

In the absence of proper means of testing the Board's authority to do this, we cannot express an opinion as to the legality or otherwise of this procedure, and we must assume that the Board is legally entitled to do what has been done.

At the same time, we think it inequitable that land reserved for Aborigines should be leased to white men, and we intend to investigate the position thoroughly, bringing it before the notice of the Crown Lands Department, and other authorities, who may be able to advise us whether the A.P. Board has exceeded its powers or not in thus having leased to white men land which is usually understood to be reserved for Aborigines only.

Family Endowment Deductions.

WHY ARE THESE MADE?

The Aborigines Progressive Association is taking legal advice on the questions of deductions made by the Aborigines Protection Board from family endowment money due to Aboriginal mothers.

Evidence was given before the Select Committee of Parliament last year that such deductions were made, the money being used for the purpose of building additions to huts for Aborigines on Government Reserves.

The question which arises is whether the A.P. Board is legally entitled to make such deductions from family endowment money for any purpose whatsoever. We do not doubt the good intention of the A.P. Board's officials in thus attempting to finance structural additions to huts from the money due to Aborigines for child welfare; but nevertheless it seems to us to be an arbitrary action by the Board, which should be brought before the notice of the Commissioner for Child Endowment.

On our reading of the Aborigines Protection Acts, any building erected on an Aboriginal Reserve may become the property of the Board, and is not the property of any individual Aboriginal residing in such building.

It therefore seems to us unjust that

individual Aborigines should suffer deductions from Child Endowment money to provide housing which the Board should provide from its Parliamentary grant (exceeding £50,000 annually). We understand that family endowment money is intended to assist the parents to provide food, clothing, and other necessities for children, but that it should not be used for capital improvements to the property vested in the A.P. Board as trustees for Aborigines generally.

A similar grievance exists in regard to the practice of some managers of Reserves in compelling Aborigines to "work for rations", i.e. on improving the Manager's garden, or in other work on the Reserves. It is our opinion that rations for Aborigines are granted by parliament without any "string" tied on, and are considered to be a birthright of Aborigines, in compensation for the expropriation of their lands by white men.

On these matters legal advice is now being taken.

THE SCOURGE OF T.B.

When the white men first came to Australia, thousands of our people were wiped out by measles and the common cold, which, in their primitive state, were unknown among our people.

Today, the dread scourge of T.B. is raging among Aborigines throughout Australia, and is taking heavy toll in New South Wales.

Our people inherit strong physique, but cannot contend against the poor food which the white man's charity, and benevolence, and official "protection" allows.

Rations are: 8lbs. of flour, 2lbs. of sugar, 1lb. of tea, 1lb. of baking powder, and 1/- worth of meat per week.

On this ration many thousands of Aborigines have starved to death on Government Reserves, their constitution weakened to the point where they fall victims to T.B.

Since the Aborigines Progressive Association started to stir up the Government, the official ration has in some places been increased by addition of 6-ozs. jam, 4 potatoes, 2 onions.

We would like to see Mr. Gollan, the

Colonial Secretary, trying to exist on the ration, even in its improved form!

Our accusation is that the system of Government protection does not protect, but slowly exterminates.

The first step in combatting the spread of T.B. among Aborigines will be to ensure that proper medical treatment, and above all, PROPER FEEDING, is given to sufferers from this complaint.

Among other causes of T.B. are the disgraceful huts-provided by the Government on Aboriginal reserves. Cold in winter and hot in summer, these huts are death-traps for Aborigines, and are a disgrace to the Government of a community which calls itself civilised.

It is September now, and the winter has gone.

But during those winter months, you kind white people take note, there were thousands of aged and sick Aborigines shivering with cold and hunger in the bush slums, on your Government Reserves.

No Aboriginal should go hungry or cold.

CURSE YOU!

Queensland's Protection

ABORIGINES' DEATH PACT Father and Son.

In last month's "Abo Call" we published a statement by Mr. R. M. Watson, a North Queensland grazier, to the effect that Aborigines have been drowned in attempting to escape from Palm Island and other settlements off the coast of North Queensland.

We have ample evidence that Aborigines of Queensland are terrified of being taken away from the mainland to islands off the coast, particularly Aborigines from the far inland, who have never seen the ocean.

The Queensland Government's policy of segregating Aborigines on ocean islands is one of the most callous policies ever put into effect by an Australian Government in pursuit of the policy of extermination by "protection".

The Queensland Government uses its coastal islands for lepers, criminals, and inebriates, and also for Aborigines, the intention in every case being the same — namely to get rid of pariahs by placing them far away from the sight of the general community.

No wonder the blacks are terrified when forcibly taken from their home districts by policemen, and told that they are going to be put on an Island — from which they know they will never escape.

The following extract is from the *Sydney Morning Herald* of 18th June, 1938, and we publish it without any other knowledge of the facts than is given in the newspaper's report of them.

Not having seen any report of the Coroner's findings, we cannot say why the father and son seemingly attempted suicide, but leave it to our readers to make their surmise.

(from *Sydney Morning Herald*, 18th June, 1938.)

Brisbane, Friday.

"An Aboriginal boy was found dead, and his father in a very low condition, in the Police cells at Forsyth, near Cairns, this morning. Both had their throats gashed."

"A native tracker who was escorting the father and son from Normanton en route to Fantome Island, stopped at Forsyth on Thursday night, and the Aborigines were locked in one cell."

"When the Tracker went to the cell this morning, he found the boy dead, and the father with a deep gash in his throat."

"It is believed that a razor had been used. There is no doctor at Forsyth, the nearest being at Georgetown, 25 miles away, but medical aid was given by the matron at the Forsyth Hospital."

Our only comment on the foregoing is — CAN SUCH THINGS BE?

REFUSED OWN MONEY To Take Health Trip

We reprint the following lengthy article from a recent issue of "The Northern Guardian" (Queensland):

In dealing with the Aborigines, whites indulged a sense of humour in the early days of North Queensland settlement. Traps were set with poisoned flour; "nigger" hunts were a popular pastime; a handful of sugar, a pipe of "bacey" seduced the native women; syphilis, T.B.; and alcohol decimated a virile, indigenous people.

Some policemen and their black troopers played tricks on the local "boys". One black was handcuffed around a sapling on the Russell; and perished from thirst when his captors forgot to ride back for him. Gins and piccaninies were brained with snider butts. Out West the wealthy squatters drove the natives from vital water-holes and hunting grounds. The North West was tamed; great herds established; great tribes eradicated.

Cruelty More Refined

Cruelty to the Aborigines was then crude; today it is more refined.

Take the typical case of Hida, an aged Aborigine employed on the cane farm of Mr. Ned Hynes at Daradgee. One of the oldest inhabitants of this district, Hida remembers the building of Goondi Mill. He is under the protection of the

Aboriginal Department, and signed on by his employer. The award wage is paid for his labour, his earnings being paid into the police as agent for the Protector. These are banked to his credit, with the exception of £1/10/- per week allowed Hida for living expenses. On paper the size of Hida's banking account would place him beyond want for the rest of his life; unhappily, things do not work out that way. The allowance of 30/- per week has to feed and clothe Hida and his son, John, a fourth-class scholar at the Daradgee State School. John is another Australian child, who lacks certain foods considered necessary for the growing child.

Last year, Mr. Hynes considered Hida's failing health would improve by a change of climate. The employer, on Hida's behalf, applied to the Protector for some money held in trust on the Aborigine's account to cover the cost of a trip. The request was promptly refused; natives have to be zealously protected against themselves.

No wonder the authorities of today condemn their predecessors' treatment of the blacks. Those old time tyrants had much to learn.

Unenviable Position

The position as it stands is: For Hida. Thirty shillings a week is absurdly inadequate to feed and clothe himself and John. The charity of Mr. Hynes alone makes it possible to carry on. No doubt, Hida's stomach trouble is caused largely by working hard on insufficient and inferior food; and Hida was an exceptionally hard toiler. Should Mr. Hynes forsake his old servitor, refuse to sign him on again, father and son will be sent to Palm Island without hesitation. The old man would be uprooted from the soil he has known from a child; his age and background make it impossible for him to fit in; until at last his body, from which hundreds of pounds have been filched, would find relief in death.

Window Dressing at La Perouse

The Aboriginal Reserve at La Perouse, near Sydney, contains well-built houses, with water laid on, and other modern conveniences. The Aborigines of La Perouse make a fairly good living by fishing (some having their own boats), and by selling toy boomerangs and souvenirs to tourists.

For this reason, a number of well-meaning white people in Sydney have formed the impression that all Aboriginal Reservations are similar to that of La Perouse.

The truth is, that there is nothing like it anywhere else in New South Wales. Everything is done by the Government to make La Perouse into a "model" Reservation, or "window-dressing" exhibit, so that the people of Sydney, and overseas visitors, may receive a favourable impression of the treatment of Aborigines in New South Wales.

An example of this "pampering policy" at La Perouse is the fact that unemployed La Perouse "inmates" may obtain white man's unemployed relief wages; but when we ask for the same privilege to be extended by the Department of Labour and Industry to Aborigines living on the bush Reservations, we are met with a flat refusal.

Conditions are so good, by comparison, on La Perouse, that we would make the suggestion for every Aboriginal in New South Wales to come and live there!

That would show up the Government's hypocrisy, because there are only a few houses at La Perouse Reserve, and strangers from other districts have to camp in the scrub.

Our advice to country Aborigines, who are living in half-starved conditions or bush-slums, is that they should roll their swags and come La Perouse, to put the acid test on the Government's policy.

We would like to see ten thousand Aborigines living at La Perouse, which would provide a Tourist Sideshow worth seeing!

MASSACRES IN VICTORIA

HORRIBLE STORIES OF EXTERMINATION.

The following terrible stories of massacre of the blacks in the Port Phillip District (Now Victoria) are related by JAMES BONWICK, formerly an Inspector of Schools, and well-known historian. The extracts are taken from his books, "The Wild White Man And The Blacks of Victoria", published in Melbourne, 1863.

The accusing finger of history is pointed at White Australians, and today the Aborigines, the remnant of a murdered people, ask that this cruel persecution shall cease.

The conflicts between the whites and blacks of Port Phillip have not been so bloody and constant as in the neighbouring colony of Tasmania. Our natives were a gentler race than the curly-headed Islanders. Still, a sad tale is to be told of aggressions and murders in the olden times.

If the settlers can tell of stolen sheep and slaughtered shepherds, the natives can also rehearse a tale of seduction and murder. Mr. Protector Robinson assures us that "nine-tenths of the mischief charged to the aborigines is the result of the white man's interference with the native women."

The first murder by the aborigines of Port Phillip had its origin in this cause — interference with their females. Two shepherds belonging to the Port Phillip Association had been sent down in the early part of 1836 to Mr. Batman's first station on Indented Head. They were murdered upon their return.

One of them had been wounded by the natives of Van Diemen's Land, and bore a deadly hatred against all blacks. Another shepherd about this time bound a native girl to a tree to secure her while he was away with his flock. Contriving to escape the poor thing fled to Buckley for protection. He told Mr. Gellibrand, who immediately sent the rough rascal back to Van Diemen's Land.

The next attack was an unaccountable one. Mr. Franks, formerly of Green Ponds, in Tasmania, had settled near Mt. Cotterill. Always kind to the aborigines, he had no fear of aggression.

Some callers at the homestead discovered the gentleman and James Smith, his overseer, lying quite dead, and the premises rifled of their contents.

According to Mr. Connell, four gentlemen accompanied Mr. Gellibrand to ascertain the truth of the report.

The remains of the men were brought to town and interred on Burial Hill, the little inclosure near the Flagstaff.

An organised party under Dr. Cotter, with Billiang and some of Batman's Sydney natives, set off in hostile pursuit. They soon came on to the track of the murderers. They approached a place where a lubra's grub stick was picked up and recognised.

A Great Many Killed

The end of the story will be best told in the words of Old Goslyn, the octogenarian: "They let fly at them; killed a great many, and what was not killed and wounded ran away, leaving all behind them; a dray was loaded with what they had carried away, and their spears and waddies and tomahawks."

Mr. McKillop, writing from the New Settlement, Yarra Yarra, June 20th, 1836, gives a version of the murder, and adds:—"Since then I have heard from thence that ample justice has been visited on the tribe who murdered Mr. Franks. His clothes, blankets, guns, flour, etc., were found in their possession, and no mercy was shown them by the tribe that was sent from the New Settlement to do the needful."

A somewhat similar chase took place after a sheep-stealing party near the Victoria Ranges, with the help of friendly natives — of which the paper of the day states, "It was not until some hard scuffling had taken place, and a considerable number of the blacks were killed and wounded, that the marauders beat a retreat."

Above fifty of one tribe, the Gipps Land, were coldly murdered in the search for a supposedly white female captive.

The natives were not without their tales of wrongs. The following quotation from the Sydney Government Gazette, confirms this statement:—"Whereas, it has come to the knowledge of the Government, that on the night of 23rd February last, a party of six or more armed Europeans surprised a number of aboriginal natives, sleeping in a

tea-tree scrub, in the immediate vicinity of the station of Messrs. Smith and Orsby, in the Portland Bay District; and then and there barbarously murdered three aboriginal females and one male child, by gun or pistol shots, besides wounding a fourth female. It is hereby notified," etc.

Many of the stock-keepers and shepherds were from Van Diemen's Land, and had, in many cases, shed the blood of the poor Tasmanians. They were not indisposed to regard the shooting of all blackfellows as pleasant and proper sport.

The late Protector, Mr. Dredge, thus records an atrocity:—"To one has been given the carcass of a dead lamb, which he forthwith proceeds to roast for himself and his two lubras; while the operation is going on, he seats himself by the fire with one of his women, while the donor sits opposite with the musket in his hand; in an unsuspecting moment he shoots the black man, and with the butt end of his piece knocks out the brains of the woman and the helpless infant at her breast. The other woman, gathering firewood at a little distance, escapes by flight. The bodies of the others are then burnt to prevent detection."

According to Mr. Parker, in July, 1838, Mr. Bowman's party of the Pyrenees were said to have killed fourteen persons. Bowman's servants were tried for burning the bodies of the slain, to conceal their cruelty; they were acquitted for want of white evidence.

We give the following story upon the authority of the Rev. Mr. Threlkeld, many years a missionary in New South Wales:—"A native was taken by a party of whites and made to ascend a tree with a rope round his neck: this he was directed to fasten to one of the limbs of the tree. When he had done this he was fired at again and again; he was wounded and clung to the tree. A volley was then fired at him; he let go his hold, and was suspended as a terror to others. Was it surprising when they were tortured by such acts of cruelty if they became apt scholars?"

500 Slaughtered

The same gentleman adds:—"I have been informed that a petition has been presented to the Governor containing a list of nineteen murders committed by the blacks. I would, if it were necessary, make out a list of 500 blacks who had been slaughtered by the whites, and that within a short time. It was known to many there that a party of stockmen went in search of the blacks to the northward, and having found them ripped up a number of men and women, and dashed out the brains of the children."

In 1842, the Government at Melbourne offered a reward of £50 for the discovery of the white murderer of three native women while asleep, at Portland Bay. Not a few instances are authenticated in which poison has been laid for them, as though they had been vermin. The sawyers and splitters of the bush have been known to decoy women to their huts, keep them awhile, and then destroy them. Commandoes would be got up by them on some Sunday holiday for the perpetration of a threat of vengeance, and from lustful cravings.

Several convicts were executed some years ago at Sydney for a frightful raid against a tribe, when they butchered parents and children together. With others it was like that described by Barrington of the Boers: "Firing small shot into the legs and thighs of a Hottentot is a punishment not unknown to some of these monsters."

Well might the South Australian Commissioners declare of such Englishmen that "they dealt with the aborigines as if they regarded them not as members of the human family, but as inferior animals, and created for their use."

CAPRICORNIA

THE ADVENTURES OF NAWNIM

We publish this month another extract from Xavier Herbert's great Novel of North Australia, CAPRICORNIA, which won the Commonwealth Prize this year. (Book published by The Publicist Publishing Coy., 209a Elizabeth Street, Sydney. Price six shillings).

The following extract tells how NAWNIM, the half-caste son of MARK, is brought from his birthplace on Flying Fox Island, and sees the wonders of white civilisation for the first time.

Mark was tired of Flying Fox and treping. It was his plan to set up a new camp on Chineri Island in the Tikkalalla Group and to fish for pearl-shell on the shallow banks that lay between there and the Dutch East Indies.

It was for the purpose of raising money to buy a diving-outfit that he was trying to sell the electric power plant.

He was beginning to despair of ever being able to sell the plant, when he met a man named Jock Driver, who owned a cattle-station called Gunamaiah, situated on the Melisande River.

Jock Driver was a North-country Englishman and very mean. He was deeply interested in the machine from the moment he heard of it, but did not show that he was more than casually so, because he wished to make a bargain of the purchase.

An ordinary Australian of the locality would have taken Mark's word for what he said about the machine, and would have said Yes or No to the price asked, and, as a preliminary to doing business, would have stood the needy seller treat. Mark had to stand treat himself, and had to take Jock out to inspect the plant.

Nawnim's Home

Thus it happened that one quiet afternoon in the early part of the Wet Season of that year, little Nawnim, now aged six, while playing in Mark's house, taking advantage of Mark's absence in Town and Yeller Jewty's in the native camp, heard a splash of the anchor and the rattle of a chain. For a moment he stood bewildered, then crept to the front door and peeped out, to be confronted with the sight of Mark and Chook and Jock landing from the dinghy.

Nawnim ran to the back door, intending to flee. But flight was put out of the question by the sight of heavy-handed Jewty running home. For a moment he hesitated, gathering his little wits, then drew back, and, after making a wild survey of his surroundings, rushed into hiding in the bedroom. Jewty was rushing home to get her infant daughter Diana, whom she had left asleep on Mark's white-sheeted bed. Diana was a black quadron, her father being a black-fellow. Mark forbade Jewty to have the child in the house.

Mark's house consisted of one large room, with a kitchen built under the back veranda and connected with the room by a curtained doorway. The room itself was large and high. Two-thirds of it served as a living-room, the rest, screened off by canvas curtains prettily stencilled by the finicky hand of Mark, as the bedroom. Nawnim rushed into the bedroom so precipitately that he nearly crashed into the bed. He woke Diana. She was naked like himself, but chocolate-coloured, not copperish as he was. She did not see him. He darted under the bed.

The whitemen came up the beach.

Jewty flew in through the back door, took a peep from the front. The whitemen were within a few yards now. She drew back, hesitated for a moment, then darted into the bedroom.

Nawnim could see into the living-room through a gap in the loose-drawn curtain. He saw the whitemen enter, as did Jewty, who was crouching by the gap. The whitemen stopped in the middle of the room.

Jock asked for a drink. Mark said that they must wait till the crew brought the things from the ship. Then Chook said that he would like Jock to try his Ambrosia, and went off to his house to get some. Soon Mark went to the front door to see what the crew were doing, then, seeing that the boys were idling, went out to hurry them.

Jock walked about the neatly-appointed room, examining it. Nawnim could see his face, which was one such as he had never seen before. It frightened him. Jock was, in fact, quite a good-looking

fellow. What troubled Nawnim was his colouring. His mouth was as red as fresh raw meat, and thick-lipped and wide and constantly writhing. Nawnim was used to lean-faced, brown-faced, thin-lipped, small-eyed whitemen. Jock's face was as red as a boiled crayfish, even redder than it usually was in this climate in which it was as foreign as a gumtree would be in his native fogs, because it had lately been put under the blood-rousing influences of salt-wind and grog. The redness of his face set off the blueness of his bulging English eyes and the blackness of his hair and the whiteness of his large prominent teeth. His teeth looked like a shark's to Nawnim, his eyes like a crab's.

A Pommy

When he approached the bedroom Nawnim turned sick with fright. Jewty must have been given a turn too. She rushed to the bed and snatched up her baby and trod on Nawnim's little hand. Nawnim yelped, heaved away, struck his head on the underneath of the bed, and rolled into view bawling. Diana screamed and clutched at her mother's hair.

Jock looked in. The children's cries died in their mouths. All three stared at him. "Hellaw!" he cried. "What's this — the fahmily, eh?"

Still the trio stared. Jock looked them over, grinning, then said to Jewty, "You Mark's missus?"

She blinked.

"Eh?" he asked.

"Yu-i," she muttered.

"These his piccanins?"

She nodded to Nawnim and muttered, "Dat one belong Mark."

"Not this one?" he asked, stepping up to look at Diana.

Jewty shrank back, with Diana shrinking up in her arms.

"Eh?" asked Jock.

"Him belong him blackfella," she muttered; then, as Jock put out a hand to touch the child, she cried sharply, "No more!" and struck his hand back with her own.

Jock's eyes blazed. "You bitch!" he hissed.

Jewty stood rigid, with hand upraised to strike again.

Then Mark and Chook came in. Jock turned, looked round the curtain, and said to Mark with a grin, "Joost introduced me to your fahmily. I didn't know ye had one."

"Eh?" murmured Mark, approaching. He stopped at the doorway and gaped. Nawnim shrank back to the wall.

Jock chuckled. Mark swallowed, looked from one to another of the group, then said thickly to Jewty, "What the hell you doin' here with those brats?"

She frowned, hugged Diana to her, and answered sulkily, "Him two-fella come himself."

After a moment Mark grunted, "Get out!"

She slunk past him, eyeing him sideways. Nawnim still shrank against the wall. Mark growled at him, "Come out of that — come on now!" Nawnim shrank more.

"That your kid, eh?" said Jock with a grin.

Mark glanced at him sourly.

"The lassie tawl me he wuz," said Jock, chuckling deeply.

Mark stepped up to Nawnim. As he put out a hand to seize him, Nawnim shot from the wall, collided with the bed, stumbled, dashed to the door. Jock grabbed him. He shrieked, fought furiously, wriggled free, and darted to the back door. Jewty was on the veranda. As Nawnim bounded past her she dealt him a cuff that sent him sprawling on his face in the sand. In an instant he was up and flying, shrieking, to the bush.

Jock laughed heartily, slapped scowling Mark on the back. As they were sitting down to drink, he said to Mark, "Fine stahmp of laddie, that. What ye goin' to do wi' him?"

Continued from page 3

Mark answered with a grunt that was intended to give the impression that he did not wish to discuss the matter.

"Ye leavin' him behind here when ye gaw awee?" asked Jock.

Mark looked at him, and after a moment, said, "Well — as a matter of fact I was thinkin' of sendin' him to the Compound. He — he's not really mine, you know. I — I found him in the bush."

"In the bulrushes, eh?" asked Jock, and winked at Chook.

Mark blinked, fingered his glass.

It was true that he had thought of sending Nawnim to the Native Compound in Port Zodiac. He had thought of doing so for years whenever his conscience was pricked by the thought of the boy's growing up as a savage. He had been prevented by fear that the Protector of Aborigines might discover that he was the father of the child and charge him with the cost of his maintenance. He did not know that the cost of maintaining a child in the Compound Halfcaste's Home — indeed of maintaining any inmate of the Compound — was, even there where the necessities of life were expensive, only fourpence per day. Had he known it, he surely would not have been troubled by the thought of his son's growing up as a half-starved savage.

"I could do wi' him if ye dawn't wawnt him," said Jock. "There in't many yeller-fellers doon my way." He chuckled, and added, "I in't been there long enough yet. I've got one yeller-feller meself. Boot it's a bluidy gurr! I wawnt boys." He laughed.

He went on, "I wawnt yeller kids to train as foremen. The Government cawn't mairk a bloke pay wages to his own sons — see?"

"What — you raisin' a herd of yeller-fellers?" asked Chook.

Jock swallowed a mouthful of *Ambrosia*, gasped, blinked. "Gawd!" he breathed. "Wha's thaht — kerosene?"

Chook frowned.

Mark grinned, and said, "Yeah — you can have the kid if you want him, Jock. But don't go tellin' anyone where you got him. Dinkum, he's not mine —"

"Aw I wawn't say nawthin'," said Jock.

"Give's your word on it," said Mark. "And give's your word you'll treat him decent."

"Right!" said Jock, and grasped his hand. "There's me word. You can rely on me to bring him up like he wuz me awn soon, cos then I wawn't have to pay him wages — see?"

Mark thought that a mean motive, but was satisfied that by reason of it Nawnim would be well treated for the rest of his life.

Jock's station was about two hundred miles inland from Port Zodiac. It covered some two or three thousand square miles. Such a holding was not thought vast in Capricornia, where there were some even more than ten thousand square miles.

Jock intended to place Nawnim in a stock-camp, in which he would grow up to learn the ways of horses and cattle as the business of his life. He would take to the saddle as soon as possible and work with native stockriders as one of them till he became a man, when, should he prove to be more intelligent, or rather, perhaps, more selfish and purposeful, than a native, he would save Jock the expense of employing a whiteman. The natives made the best of stockriders, but could not be relied upon to remain at work. Jock often had to track his black staff down and bring them back to work at the point of a gun.

Nawnim's status and pay would never be much better than a native's. The pay of Jock's natives was tobacco and food and clothes of a sort, their status not that of his horses. He and the many graziers like him excused their meanness by saying that it was useless giving the natives money when they did not understand the value of it. They took pains to see that the natives were never taught it.

Jock had no difficulty in securing native-labour, for all his meanness. On the contrary, he secured it easily. For, when his cattle came, the native game was scared away, or if not scared then starved away, because, during the lean times of Dry Season, the cattle, themselves

hard put for succour, would take possession of all permanent grazing. This state of things would greatly affect the natives whose country the Government had leased to Jock, so that they, who, unlike their game, were prevented by tribal laws from wandering out of their domain, would be put to the alternative of starving or eating Jock's cattle or going to work for him.

The second would be their choice till the police came and shot them. All over the land were bone-piled spots where lazy Aborigines were taught not to steal a whiteman's bullocks. For natives who were unable to work there was the fourpenny Compound. But for some reason or other that institution was not popular. Most Aborigines who had been born in freedom preferred to do their starving in the bush.

And all the while the Nation was boasting to the world of its Freedom and Manliness and Honesty. Australia Felix!

Nawnim Goes to Town

Jock's stay at Flying Fox was brief. As soon as the machine was packed and stowed, he said that he was ready to go. Nawnim was captured and taken yelling aboard the lugger.

Five days were spent at sea, nearly every hour of which Jock spent in the cabin, sick.

Through Jock's confinement, little Nawnim had no need to cower in the chains as he had during the first hour or two; and because of Jock's lack of appetite Nawnim got most of his helping of food.

At last the end of the voyage came in sight. The *Spirit of the Land* passed into Zodiac Harbour and went slowly towards the town, revealing to Nawnim one by one the wonders of Civilisation.

First wonder was an automobile, a high-wheeled waggon of the type called Motor Buggy, the forerunner of the modern motor-truck. As the ship was making her way under sail alone, Nawnim heard, the strange thing roaring in the bush long before he saw it, and saw the cloud of red dust it was raising. Mark noticed his interest and forthwith ordered the helmsman to hug the shore.

The buggy — it was just a Thing to Nawnim — rushed from the bush, swung into the beach-road, ran parallel with the lugger's course. Nawnim had never seen a wheeled vehicle before. He was amazed, and still more amazed when his father waved to the Thing and received an answer.

They crept past the Calaboose. Nawnim stared in wonder at the buildings on the hill and at a gang of black felons working on the road and at a gang of white ones fishing from the cliff. They passed the great Meat-works, which was still more amazing because painted black, whereas the Calaboose was white. They coasted Mailunga Beach, which was an almost exact miniature of the ocean-beach at Flying Fox; but it was rendered incomparably more interesting by the fact that two men were pedalling bicycles through the grove of coconuts. Nawnim hopped with excitement and clapped his yellow hands.

Then Jock, who had been asleep, became aware of the fact that the ship was running in smooth water, and leapt up and poked his crimson face from the hatchway, saw what there was to see, and said fervently, "Thahnk gawd!"

Nawnim started, edged away.

Then came into view the Compound, the Nation's Pride, a miniature city of whitewashed hovels crowded on a barren hill above the sea. Then they passed the hospital, then the Cable Station, then the Residency, then a cluster of neat white houses standing amid ponciana trees that blazed like torches under masses of scarlet blooms.

Nawnim's attention was then snatched away from the shore to the jetty, which suddenly appeared from behind a point, standing with red piles high above the fallen water, looking like a crowded flock of long-legged jabiroos. But even that amazing sight did not hold his attention for long. At the end of the jetty lay an utterly astounding Thing. He gaped, too young and too amazed to think. A blackboy near him said in the Yurracumbunga tongue, "That's a steamer."

When at length the steamer was hidden behind a headland, Nawnim, who

had been staring at it, wrapt, became aware of bustling aboard. He dodged among scrambling legs, concentrated on not being pushed too close to those devilish creatures the whitemen, till a pair of black hands whisked him out of the way and dropped him in the middle of a high coil of rope.

He heard the anchor fall, then struggled out of the coil to see that the lugger was lying among several other vessels of similar type, which were peopled with squat quaint-visaged human creatures of a breed he had never seen before. While he was staring at these objects he was seized again, lifted high in the air, lowered with sickening rapidity into the dinghy. He found himself so close to his foster-father that he could smell the sickening whiteman smell of him. For once he was glad when the hands of his true father at length took hold of him, because they lifted him out of that terrible red presence and bore him to the wide wide shore.

He was about to fly when Mark seized him again and carried him, protesting uproariously, towards what he was convinced was something frightful. He was left in a humpy on Devilish Bay in the care of a halfcaste woman named Fat Anna.

He Camps at Fat Anna's

To Nawnim a deserted house was a delightful playground, but an occupied house a place to be avoided like a reputed lair of debil-debils. Therefore his first few hours' residence in Fat Anna's house were not at all comfortable; indeed they were hours of incarceration rather than residence, because it was necessary to restrain him owing to his determination to escape. Anna chased him through mud and mangroves and brought him home thrice before it occurred to her that he was what she called a Myall, a wild creature.

The chasing upset her, because she was very fat; but she was also very good-natured and did not thrash him as another person might, nor even reproach him, nor do anything more unfriendly than to hug him to her ample breast and pant a few laughing protests while bathing him with the scent of sweets.

It was with her sweets that she eventually dispelled his mistrust of her. She made these herself of butter and sugar and essences in her kitchen. It was with these that she had made most of her mass of flesh.

Having tamed him with sweets, she washed him, performing the operation with such delicacy of touch that he, engaged with a sugar-filled pawpaw, scarcely realized what was going on below his chin. Then she dressed his sores and cropped his hair and put him into his first pair of breeches, which she had made from an old blouse of spotted blue print during his period of intractability. Not even one so misanthropical as Nawnim could long resist the motherliness of Anna. Before many days were out he was snuggling up to her in sheer love.

Anna was of a lower caste than Nawnim. Her father was a Japanese. Therefore, according to the Law of the Land, which recognised no diluent for Aboriginal blood but that of a white race, she was a full-blooded blackgin and not entitled to franchise as Nawnim theoretically would be when he came of age. But Anna did not care. She had small dealings with franchised people, and lived in her own style, untroubled by the formalities that bound the rest of the band to which she legally belonged, because the police seemed to realize that, at least as far as she was concerned, the law they served was an ass.

She earned her living by washing clothes for the richer members of the Asiatic crews of the pearling-fleet and by giving her favours to those of them she liked. These were the creatures Nawnim had been amazed to see about him on the day of his arrival. When he inquired about them, Anna told him they were Japs an' Chows.

She took him for walks through the railway-yards, and down round the pearling-stations, and up the jetty, but never through the town. The Yards were quiet just then, that being the 'tween-trains period; and the jetty was not nearly so interesting when viewed from above and without its steamer; and the town was

forbidden ground for one who was a Ward of the State as well as a whiteman's shame.

But Nawnim saw countless interesting things that Anna did her best to explain to him.

The Dible-dible

One day he wandered into the railway-yards, and, becoming tired, sought rest and shelter from the sun beneath a cattle-car that stood in a silent rake. He lay on the cool steel sleeper, unconcerned about the grime he gathered and the reek he breathed, amusing himself with slaughtering with a rusty bolt the meat-ants that ran about him.

Then he heard a distant sound and sat up listening. The cause of the sound was approaching rapidly, so rapidly that he leapt up to flee and struck his head against the dung-encrusted undercarriage with such force as to knock him flat.

The sound was now a thundering. The very earth quaked. He dug fingers into earth and steel, about to dart into sunshine and safety, when, with a frightful grinding roar and a belching of scalding vapour in his face, a Thing of horrible unutterable dashed across his path. His shriek was as feeble as the plaint of a grass-stalk in a storm.

He recovered his wits to find himself lying with throat on a rail and hands outstretched clutching gravel and teeth clenched on oily grass. He looked up, dazed. There was nothing terrible before him — nothing, indeed, but the roof of Anna's humpy smiling at him through the tops of palms. He crawled out warily. Nothing in sight to right or left.

When he looked at Anna's again his heart ached with love for her. He slowly rose, and rising glanced to right to see — Horror! — the Thing rushing down on him — black hair trailing and white whiskers billowing about its pounding flanks.

He tripped over a rail. The Thing yelled at him. He echoed it with all his might, shot to his feet, raced to the embankment, pitched headlong down, fell in a heap, shot up again, crashed through the scrub, tearing his flesh and scuttling crabs and birds, rushed into the humpy, and shrieking, flung himself into the outstretched arms of Anna.

"Whazzer madder liddel man?" she crooned. "Aw wazzer madder wid de liddle myall now?"

She hugged him close and kissed his distorted face and nursed him and petted him till he could find the voice to speak. "Oh trice!" he moaned. "Dible-dible — dible-dible — Oh jeezon trice!"

"The Abo Call"

Important Announcement

This issue of "The Abo Call" will be the last regular monthly issue of this newspaper, which, after having been issued for six months, will now suspend publication temporarily.

The issue of a regular monthly Aborigines' Newspaper has involved financial loss, owing to the difficulty of distributing the paper among aborigines and the public.

Until such time as the Aborigines Progressive Association is on a stronger footing, numerically and financially, it will not be possible to conduct our propaganda by means of a monthly newspaper.

It is intended, however, to continue the propaganda, by means of a series of pamphlets and booklets, the first of which, to be entitled THE CASE FOR THE ABORIGINES, by J. T. Patten, is now in preparation and will be published shortly.

As soon as the Government of New South Wales shows its intentions towards the Aborigines by passage of the new legislation that has been promised, a booklet will be issued stating the opinion of the Aborigines regarding the new legislation.

In the meantime President J. T. Patten and the Officers of the Aborigines Progressive Association will continue an organising campaign to secure an increased membership for the Association.

All correspondence should be addressed to the Association, at the Head Office, 209a Elizabeth Street, Sydney.